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a booklet on the

prevention

of **s y p h i l i s**

and **gonorrhea**

for distribution in clinics and by physicians

The information in this pamphlet is derived from the scientific data published in the Journal of the American Medical Association, October 5, 1940; Venereal Disease, Information, Vol. 21, October 1940; and Supplement to the Journal of Social Hygiene, November 1940, by the Committee on Prophylaxis of the United States Public Health Service and the American Social Hygiene Association.

Foreword

The sure way to avoid syphilis and gonorrhea is to avoid sexual relations outside of marriage. Sexual intercourse is not essential to mental and physical strength or to vigorous health. Sex desire is a normal part of life, but like other impulses, it should be controlled. Wholesome physical and mental activities, such as sports and games, hobbies, studies, and other interests, are valuable aids in control of the sex impulse. Character and honor developed by home, school, and church, are the best influences for clean living and the best protection against the dangers of prostitution, venereal disease, and immorality.

There are some men who, unrestrained by their ideals, religion, or sense of duty and decency, habitually or occasionally go with prostitutes and other loose women. For them chiefly this pamphlet has been written, not only to help them escape syphilis and gonorrhea, but also to help them safeguard their families and friends to whom these diseases may be spread.

// It doesn't pay

to take a chance with syphilis
and gonorrhea!"

You've heard men say that. And every man knows it's true—if he stops to think. Trouble is men are apt to do their thinking when it's too late—after they have exposed themselves to venereal disease.

Now is the time to do some straight thinking. Now is the time to learn how to take care of yourself—to know what to do about venereal disease. It is hard to think straight after you get into a situation where you may be exposed. It is hard to

protect yourself if you are not prepared in advance.

You know that syphilis (siff) and gonorrhea (clap) are almost always caught during the sex act with an infected person. Syphilis can also be caught by "necking" an infected person. But can you tell who is infected? You cannot.

No "loose woman," "pick-up," or prostitute can say she is safe.

Many infected people don't look sick. Lots of men and women think they can tell an infected person just by looking. They are wrong. Only a doctor, using careful laboratory tests, can tell with certainty whether or not a person is infected at the time of the examination. A prostitute may pass a venereal disease on to you from an infected man who had intercourse with her a short time after a doctor gave her a clean bill of health.

You've got to know the answers about syphilis and gonorrhea. Here they are.

Syphilis is caused by a germ called the spirochete. Syphilis can cripple, cause blindness, insanity, or death. The first sign is usually a sore where the germ enters the body. It appears about 3 weeks after infection. Even without treatment, the sore may disappear and the victim imagines he is O. K. But the disease is still there. Several years after, bones, eyes, nerves, brain, and heart may be damaged beyond repair. This is the price paid for neglecting syphilis.

Gonorrhea, too, is a serious disease. It can cripple by causing a form of rheumatism and arthritis. Gonorrhea is caused by a germ called the gonococcus. Like the syphilis germ the gonococcus is usually passed from one person to another during sexual intercourse. Gonorrhea attacks the inside of the penis and other

parts of the reproductive system. Three to five days after infection a man feels a sharp, burning pain when he tries to urinate. Later, pus oozes from his penis. If the disease is not treated, it may spread and prevent a man from ever becoming a father.

The surest way to avoid syphilis and gonorrhea is not to have sex contacts outside of marriage.

Many infections can be prevented by certain measures, before and after sexual exposure. The medical name of these measures is PROPHYLAXIS (proh-fi-LAX-iss). Prophylaxis means guarding yourself against disease.

Prophylaxis against venereal disease includes the using of a condom during the sex act and if possible, chemicals after the act. The condom partially protects both the man and the woman. It acts as a shield which keeps the disease germs from

being passed from one person to another. Securing chemical prophylaxis from a pro station or a physician is an added safeguard.

Don't take chances.

Always guard yourself.

Use Prophylaxis.

The Condom Protects Both Man and Woman

No method has yet been invented which will prevent syphilis or gonorrhea every time there is an exposure. At present the condom is the safest means there is for preventing syphilis and gonorrhea.

The condom is known to some people as a "safe," a "rubber," or a "sheath." It is a thin, elastic covering which fits closely over the penis and is used during intercourse. Usually it is made of rubber.

Next to avoiding sex contacts altogether, the greatest protection against venereal disease for both men and women is the use of the condom.

If the condom is to work right, it must be well made. A poorly made condom may break and then its user may be exposed to infection. Pure drug laws now provide standards of quality.

Many people buy condoms from "bootleg" sources—in bars, poolrooms, shoe-shine stands. You cannot trust these articles. Anyone who wants a condom should go to a reliable druggist and ask him for the best grade.

Do not buy what is known as a "short" condom—one which covers only the head of the penis. If this type is used, the retracted foreskin and the entire body of the penis are left in contact with mucous areas which may be infected.

How to Use the Condom

- 1. Do not handle the condom any more than is necessary.**

A fingernail might tear it, and then the germs will be able to go right through. The condom should be kept in its original container until used.

- 2. The condom should be put on carefully where you can see what you are doing.**

Buy only ready-rolled condoms. The condom should be rolled down the penis with one hand, holding onto the tip with the fingers of the other hand. Unless the tip is held or twisted, air may be imprisoned in the end of the condom. Air must be excluded to lessen the chance of breaking during intercourse.

- 3. No contact between the penis and the vagina should be made before the condom is put on.**
- 4. If the condom breaks while it is being put on, discard it immediately and use a new one.**
- 5. If the condom breaks during intercourse, wash yourself immediately with soap and water.**
- 6. The penis should be withdrawn as soon as the male fluid has been discharged.**

If sexual movements are continued after the discharge of male fluid, and the man happens to be infected, the woman may become infected. Sexual movements will force the fluid out of the con-

dom and the genital areas of the woman will be exposed to infection.

If the penis is left in the vagina until it becomes soft, the condom may slip off. Immediately after the climax, the man should reach for the rubber ring at the end of the condom, hold it firmly to the base of the penis, and then withdraw.

7. Remove the condom carefully.

The outside of the condom may have infected material on it. The ring of the condom should be caught between the tips of the thumb and forefinger of each hand and removed in one swift motion turning it inside out as it comes off. The fingers should not touch the outside of the condom. The condom should be discarded at once.

8. Urinate immediately after removing the condom.

9. Wash at once with soap and water.

Wash the penis thoroughly. Uncircumcised men should turn back the foreskin and wash underneath it. Remember, the condom covers only a small area. Infections often occur on unprotected parts. Be sure to wash the scrotum (the sac which contains the testicles), the hairy parts, the belly, and the insides of the thighs. The hands and face should also be thoroughly washed.

If it is possible, take a complete soap bath immediately after intercourse. The sooner the better.

Can You Depend on Prophylaxis?

Even if you use prophylaxis, you may become infected with venereal disease. There is no 100-percent guard against syphilis and gonorrhea.

If you are drinking, you are much more likely to take chances. After a few drinks, you can't think straight. You may find it difficult—even impossible—to take care of yourself properly.

Every step outlined for prophylaxis is important. If you bungle it—and you're apt to bungle when you're drunk—you may be exposed to infection because you failed to follow instructions.

Don't be cocksure about your ability to judge whether your companions are free from venereal disease. Remember! With prophylaxis or without it, every sex act (outside of marriage) should be looked on as a possible source of syphilis or gonorrhea.

If you think you have been infected, go to a doctor as quickly as you can. Men in military services should report to the nearest medical station or the nearest clinic. Civilians who are unable to pay a private doctor should go to the nearest public health department clinic. It doesn't pay to take a chance with venereal diseases.

The sure way to avoid syphilis and gonorrhea is to avoid sexual relations outside of marriage.

For more facts

READ . . .

Syphilis, Its Cause, Its Spread, Its
Cure . . . VD Folder No. 1 (Rev.
'43). Gonorrhea the Crippler—
Cured . . . VD Folder No. 5
(Rev. '43).

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